ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD
1740 W. ADAMS ST., SUITE 4600, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
PHONE (602) 364-1PET (1738) FAX (602) 364-1039
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BY:

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION FORM

If there is an issue with more than one veterinarian please file a separate Complaint Investigation Form for each veterinarian

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: Jan 23, 2019 Case Number: 19-48

A. THIS COMPLAINT IS FILED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING:

Name of Veterinarian/CVT: Katherine Hewitt

Premise Name: Ingleside Animal Hospital

Premise Address: 4855 E. Thomas Rd.

City: Phoenix State: AZ Zip Code: 85018

Telephone: (602) 840-3446

B. INFORMATION REGARDING THE INDIVIDUAL FILING COMPLAINT*:

Name: Alison Bailey

Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip Code: [redacted]

Home Telephone: _____ Cell Telephone: [redacted]

**STATE LAW REQUIRES WE HAVE TO DISCLOSE YOUR NAME UNLESS WE CAN SHOW THAT DISCLOSURE WILL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL HARM TO YOU, SOMEONE ELSE OR THE PUBLIC PER A.R.S. § 41-1010. IF YOU HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT SUBSTANTIAL HARM WILL RESULT IN DISCLOSURE OF YOUR NAME PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES OF RESTRAINING ORDERS OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.*

C. PATIENT INFORMATION (1):

Name: Bobka

Breed/Species: Cat- long hair black and white

Age: 5 yrs. Sex: Female Color: black & White

PATIENT INFORMATION (2):

Name: _____

Breed/Species: _____

Age: _____ Sex: _____ Color: _____

D. VETERINARIANS WHO HAVE PROVIDED CARE TO THIS PET FOR THIS ISSUE:

Please provide the name, address and phone number for each veterinarian.

Katherine Hewitt, D.V.M.
Ingleside Animal Hospital
4855 E. Thomas Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85018
602-840-3446

Dr. Frasier (2nd Opinion) Alta Vista Veterinary Hospital 602-277-1464

E. WITNESS INFORMATION:

Please provide the name, address and phone number of each witness that has direct knowledge regarding this case.

Sharon Kliwinski
[redacted]

Attestation of Person Requesting Investigation

By signing this form, I declare that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Further, I authorize the release of any and all medical records or information necessary to complete the investigation of this case.

Signature: Alison K Bailey

Date: January 17, 2019

F. ALLEGATIONS and/or CONCERNS:

Please provide all information that you feel is relevant to the complaint. This portion must be either typewritten or clearly printed in ink.

On Jan. 10, 2019 I took my cat, Bobka to Dr. Hewitt to examine her mouth to determine the cause of her bad breath. Dr. Hewitt looked into Bobka's mouth, but didn't touch anything and determined that Bobka had Gingivostomatitis. She said that Bobka needed all of her teeth pulled as soon as possible, at the cost of $2,000. She also ordered a Felv/FIV Snap Test, which she said came out positive for Feline Leukemia. When the assistants took Bobka for the blood test, she came back with tight bandages on her hind legs. She couldn't walk and they told me to wait a few minutes and they will take them off. The assistant said that they tried to get blood from one leg but couldn't and then they took blood from the other leg. Afterwards, it seemed like her legs hurt all night long because she kept stretching them.

The next day, Jan. 11, 2019, I went to Alta Vista Veterinary Hospital for a second opinion. Dr. Frasier looked into Bobka's mouth and put his hand in and pulled some plaque off from her back tooth. He looked at her gums and said she probably doesn't need all of her teeth pulled out. I smelled her breath when I got home and it was at least 60% better. After 4 days, her breath is now about 90% better. Dr. Frasier said to take the antibiotic that Dr. Hewitt prescribed and see how she progresses. He also repeated the Snap Leukemia/FIV test and that came out unconclusive. He then suggested a more definitive test, FeLV, PCR that was sent out to a lab. I waited 6 days for the results and Dr. Frasier called me on Jan. 17th to tell me that the test came out negative. Bobka does not have Feline Leukemia.

I am making a complaint about Dr. Hewitt for misdiagnosis of Bobka's bad breath issue and Feline Leukemia. She appears to be incompetent and lacks the ability to analyze the situation thoroughly.
I went back to Ingleside Animal Hospital on Jan. 17, 2019 to ask for a refund after I found out that Bobka did not have Feline Leukemia. The owner said he would not give me a refund. He said "You came for an opinion, and you got one" Seriously??? I would also like to be reibursed for the fees charged to me in the amount of $142.75.
I think Dr. Hewitt and Ingleside Animal Hospital should be investigated for their unethical practices.

INGLESIDE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

INGLESIDE VETERINARY SERVICES, LLC
4855 E. Thomas Road • Phoenix, Arizona 85018
(602) 840-3446 • www.ingleside.com

19-48

January 28, 2019

Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board
1740 W. Adams Street, Suite 4600
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Phone (602) 364-1738
Fax (602) 364 1039

Dear Veterinary Investigative Committee and Board members:

On January 10, 2019, at Ingleside Animal Hospital, I examined "Bobka", a 5-year-old spayed female DLH cat belonging to owner Alison Bailey. She presented to me as an appointment to check her mouth to assess her bad breath. I reviewed Bobka's limited prior history and noticed that she had documented stomatitis from 12/2014 (around the time of her last veterinary exam). Her complete physical exam and medical records from her visit on January 10, 2019 is available for your review. The most significant finding on Bobka's physical exam was the gingivitis/stomatitis in her mouth. Bobka was a very well mannered cat and I was able to perform a thorough oral exam on her in the exam room. I was able to open her mouth for a good period of time to document moderate to severe gingivitis/mild to moderate stomatitis. The inflammation was less severe around the canines and incisors, more severe around the rest of the teeth. I was even able to see that most of the crown of a mandibular carnassial molar was missing/broken off. I suspected the roots to still be present from this tooth because of the red inflamed tissues surrounding the area. I made it a point to show the owner Alison Bailey exactly what I was seeing in Bobka's mouth as I examined her- I had her mouth open and was pointing to the red, inflamed tissues around her teeth and at the broken tooth area. Bobka's mouth looked painful and there wasn't a need to "touch" her teeth. I never "pull plaque or tartar" off of teeth with my finger when pets are awake. That is what a professional dental prophylaxis is for (under anesthesia), which is exactly what I recommended for Bobka that day.

Hospital Member Since 1959
AAHA AMERICAN ANIMAL HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
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I discussed gingivostomatitis in cats with Alison Bailey and recommended that a dental procedure be scheduled as soon as possible. I told owner that it was the reason for her bad breath, red/painful gums, and likely the underlying reason for her broken/missing tooth. I explained that Bobka would likely need all of her teeth extracted. Usually with this disease, full mouth extractions and removal of all retained roots are necessary for the inflammation to subside. I told owner that it's possible that the canines/incisors could be spared, but this would have to be assessed and decided upon at the time of the procedure. I gave owner Alison Bailey a printed estimate for these recommendations (the highest cost that it could potentially be), which included our general anesthesia/dental prophy/x-ray bundle, full-mouth extractions, local anesthetic blocks, systemic analgesics, and systemic antibiotics.

Because Bobka was an indoor/outdoor cat that was not up to date on vaccines, had documented stomatitis in 2014 and gingivitis/stomatitis in 2019 when I saw her, and came from a rescue (owner had adopted her in 2014) with only a verbal mention of a combo test being negative on the prior records that I reviewed, I also recommended a FeLV/FIV ELISA test that day. Owner approved and the test came back positive for Feline Leukemia Virus. Our hospital has an IDEXX SNAP reader that automatically analyzes and imports the test results into the medical record. My technician and I (Stephanie Avila who was helping me during this appointment) were also able to visibly see the positive result on the ELISA test. It was lighter than the control but it was clearly positive. I discussed FeLV with owner Alison Bailey and provided her a client handout. I told owner that not all tests are 100% but in Bobka's case (history, physical exam findings, etc) I did believe this test to be true for her. I stressed the important of keeping her healthy (and again stressed addressing the infection/inflammation in her mouth/what we had already discussed with those recommendations) and keeping her indoors. I made no other recommendations other than submitting a CBC and chemistry panel for general health and updating her vaccines, both of which were declined due to costs. Owner did approve a course of an oral antibiotic (Clavamox). I told owner Alison Bailey that the antibiotic was being dispensed to help with her mouth and because of her viral test results- it was not a long-term solution to her oral disease by any means.

I called and spoke with Alison Bailey over the phone one week later (on January 17, 2019) for a patient update, as I usually do with any cases that I see presenting to me for anything more than routine vaccines/wellness. Alison Bailey said that Bobka was doing well and didn't have any questions or concerns for me. She was very brief/short on the phone. She mentioned wanting copies of Bobka's medical records for her personal records, and I let her know that the front office can help her with obtaining those at anytime. Later that same day (January 17, 2019) I was told that Alison Bailey came into the hospital demanding a refund for the services rendered on January 10, 2019, and she was then directed to the hospital owner, Dr. Brian Serbin.

I understand that Bobka had a different FeLV test performed at another hospital shortly after her visit with me, which was negative. I hope that it was explained to owner Alison Bailey that, with these discordant results, one or more tests should be performed again in 60-90 days. I truly hope she is FeLV negative, but I wouldn't say that she 100% doesn't have it at this point. Whether or not her viral status is positive or negative, her oral disease needs to be addressed and that is a fact. I suspect that Bobka's breath is "better" because of her being on the antibiotic, which unfortunately will be short lived.

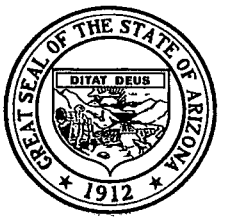
Please let me know if I can provide any further information on this case. As of Monday, January 28th, 2019, I am on maternity leave from Ingleside Animal Hospital to care for my newborn. I will be returning to work the beginning of May. I may not be able to attend meetings during this time, but I can always be reached by phone or email.

Thank you,

Katherine Hewitt, DVM

[redacted] (Cell)

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
- GOVERNOR -



VICTORIA WHITMORE
- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -

ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

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INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board

FROM: AM Investigative Committee: Robert Kritsberg, DVM - Chair
Christina Tran, DVM
Mary Williams
Carolyn Ratajack
Jarrod Butler, DVM

STAFF PRESENT: Tracy A. Riendeau, CVT - Investigations
Victoria Whitmore, Executive Director
Sunita Krishna, Assistant Attorney General

RE: Case: 19-48
Complainant(s): Alison Bailey
Respondent(s): Katherine Hewitt, D.V.M. (License: 5093)

SUMMARY:
Complaint Received at Board Office: 1/23/19
Committee Discussion: 4/2/19
Board IIR: 5/15/19

APPLICABLE STATUTES AND RULES:
Laws as Amended August 2018 (Lime Green); Rules as Revised September 2013 (Yellow).

On January 10, 2019, "Bobka," a 5-year-old female domestic long hair cat was presented to Respondent for an oral exam due to bad breath. A feline leukemia test was positive and Respondent recommended full mouth extractions to address the oral health issue. An estimate was provided and the cat was discharged with Clavamox.

On January 11, 2019, the cat was presented to Alta Vista Veterinary Hospital for a second opinion. The leukemia test performed was inconclusive therefore a PCR was submitted; test result was negative.

On January 18, 2019, the cat was started on prednisolone for gingival inflammation. The cat improved.

Complainant was noticed and appeared.
Respondent was noticed and appeared telephonically.

The Committee reviewed medical records, testimony, and other documentation as described below:

- Complainant(s) narrative: *Alison Bailey*
- Respondent(s) narrative/medical record: *Katherine Hewitt, DVM*
- Consulting Veterinarian(s) narrative/medical record: *Clifford Fraser II, DVM – Alta Vista Animal Hospital*

PROPOSED 'FINDINGS of FACT':

1. On January 10, 2019, the cat was presented to Respondent due to foul smelling breath. Complainant noted the issue about 3 – 4 months earlier. The cat had never had a dental cleaning and ate mostly soft food. The cat had not been to a doctor in 3 years and Complainant declined vaccines on this day due to costs. Upon exam, the cat had a weight = 13 pounds, a temperature = 102.2 degrees, a heart rate = 160bpm and a respiration rate = 60rpm. The cat had moderate tartar, severe stomatitis/gingivitis, missing tooth 409; Respondent suspected the roots to still be present from the tooth because of the red inflamed tissues surrounding the area. A dental prophylaxis was recommended and Complainant was advised that the cat likely would need all of her teeth extracted. There were some teeth that could be spared but that would need to be assessed and decided at the time of the procedure. An estimate was provided to Complainant and the cat was discharged with Clavamox drops, 62.5mg/mL – 15mL; give 1.0mL by mouth twice a day every 12 hours until gone.

2. On January 11, 2019, the cat was presented to Dr. Fraser for a second opinion. Complainant reported that she was advised that the cat was feline leukemia positive and needed a dental. Dr. Fraser noted that the cat had advanced periodontal disease; possible stomatitis. A FeLV snap test was performed and revealed a very faint blue circle therefore Dr. Fraser recommended sending a FeLV PCR to an outside lab. He recommended continuing the Clavamox and rechecking in 2 weeks.

3. FeLV PCR – negative.

4. On January 18, 2019, the cat was presented to Dr. Fraser for a recheck. The exam revealed gingival inflammation. Dr. Fraser documented that the cat was eating and the stomatitis was mild. He dispensed prednisolone 3mg/mL, 1mL orally twice a day for 14 days, then once a day for 14 days, and the cat was discharged with instructions to recheck in 2 weeks.

5. On February 2, 2019, the cat was presented to Dr. Frazer for a recheck. Dr. Fraser noted there was only mild inflammation remained after starting the prednisolone. He recommended reducing the prednisolone to once a day and rechecking in 14 days. The prednisolone was refilled.

6. Complainant believes Respondent misdiagnosed the cat and requested her fees be reimbursed.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

The Committee discussed that they understand Complainant's concerns however from a medical standpoint, Respondent's recommendations were legitimate to address stomatitis. It is different from the treatment provided by the second opinion veterinarian but that was his opinion on how the condition should be handled.

It can be shocking to hear that your cat needs all of the teeth extracted however Respondent's recommendations were appropriate.

COMMITTEE'S PROPOSED CONCLUSIONS of LAW:

The Committee concluded that no violations of the *Veterinary Practice Act* occurred.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION:

Motion: It was moved and seconded the Board:

Dismiss this issue with no violation.

Vote: The motion was approved with a vote of 5 to 0.

The information contained in this report was obtained from the case file, which includes the complaint, the respondent's response, any consulting veterinarian or witness input, and any other sources used to gather information for the investigation.

Tracy A. Riendeau, CVT
Investigative Division